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SPECIAL MEETING, JUNE, 1886.

A Social Meeting of the Society was held at the house of Mr. Charles Deane, in Cambridge, on Friday, the 18th instant, at five o'clock, P.M. The meeting was called to order by the President, the Rev. Dr. ELLIS, who invited Mr. Deane to make any communication he might have for the Society.

Mr. DEANE, after a few words of welcome to the members as his guests on this occasion, proceeded, —

I wish, Mr. President, to communicate to the Society for its Library several letters of Dr. Joseph Priestley written during the years 1798, 1799, and 1800, while he was living in Northumberland, Pennsylvania; and in doing so, I will add a single word relating to the distinguished gentleman to whom the letters were addressed, — the Hon. George Thacher. He was at this time a member of Congress from the District of Maine. His home was in Biddeford, on the banks of the Saco, then a beautiful and romantic village where I myself was born, and where our respective families were on terms of intimacy for many years. As a boy I remember him as one advanced in years. Judge Thacher had been a delegate to the old Congress. In 1801, having accepted the appointment of Judge of the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts, — a position he held till 1824, — he resigned his seat in Congress. He died on the 6th of April in the last-named year. Judge Thacher was a man of the highest character for probity and intelligence. He was a great reader, was particularly versed in polemical and theological disquisition, and was celebrated for his wit. He was a stanch Federalist in politics, but was attracted to Dr. Priestley by his advanced religious opinions and by his metaphysical writings, and doubtless also by his high character.

Of Dr. Priestley himself I can add nothing not already known. His life, his writings, his discoveries, and his character are before the world. Attracted to the United States by a love of her institutions, and driven from his own country for

his sympathies with the oppressed, his feelings naturally underwent a revulsion when he found himself, after a few years, an object of marked suspicion by the Federal party, and in danger of being subject to the operation of the alien and sedition law. These letters occasionally disclose his opinions on politics; but they inform us more particularly as to the employment of his time in preparing for the press the results of his studies in history, theology, and science.

In the summer of 1874 was celebrated at Northumberland what was called the "Centennial of Chemistry;" and hoping to add something to the interest of the occasion, I lent these letters to my friend and neighbor Professor E. N. Horsford, who on the second day's proceedings — "Oxygen Day" — read them to the assembly; and consent was afterwards given that copies might be taken for publication.

The letters were intrusted to me several years ago by a connection of Judge Thacher's family, with the understanding that I should ultimately place them in some suitable public depository. Before doing so, I had designed to suitably annotate them and print them, having myself a great admiration of Dr. Priestley's character. To these letters I will add transcripts of a few others furnished me by my friends. My brother Waterston and my friend Charles P. Greenough have contributed five, making nineteen in all. I have never found time to do what I have said I had intended with these letters, and I now submit them to the Society and permanently deposit them in its archives.

Mr. DEANE then read several extracts from these letters, and an interesting discussion followed.

Judge CHAMBERLAIN stated that he had in his possession four letters of Priestley, which had been rescued from a pedler's cart while on their way to a paper-mill.

Dr. OLIVER said that he had three letters which he would place at the disposal of the Publishing Committee.

Dr. CLARKE added that he had two letters, one of Priestley, addressed to Dr. Freeman, and one of Thacher about Priestley, which might be printed at the same time with the others.

Dr. PAIGE and Dr. PEABODY related characteristic incidents concerning Judge Thacher, and Dr. ELLIS spoke of Dr. Priestley.

The letters above referred to, together with three others which have been furnished by Mr. Alfred D. Foster, of this city, are here appended, arranged in chronological order. They are all addressed to "George Thacher,¹ Member of Congress, Philadelphia," or "Biddeford," unless otherwise stated.

SIR, — I think myself exceedingly obliged to you, for the communication of your excellent observations on the cause of the electricity of the atmosphere. As far as I can judge of them from the general ideas you throw out, they promise to unfold that great secret of nature which has hitherto been one of the great desiderata in philosophy. I shall be very glad to see your thoughts on this subject more at large.

I have read your *Essay on Comets* with attention and pleasure. My objection, however, to your theory is, that the atmosphere of the comets

¹ Judge Thacher's name in these letters appears with two "t's," as the Judge himself for many years was accustomed to write it. During the latter part of his life, however, he used only one "t," being convinced that this was the correct orthography. In the Reports of the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts, both modes of spelling prevail. A letter to the Recording Secretary of this Society from Mr. Peter Thacher, of Boston, contains the following statement:—

"Hon. George Thacher, fourth in descent from Antony, was born at Yarmouth, April 12, 1754. He graduated at Harvard in 1776, in the same class with Governor Gore and Chief Justice Samuel Sewall. He first commenced the practice of law at York, Maine, where he remained but a brief period. He removed to Biddeford, Maine, in 1782, succeeding to the business of Governor Sullivan. Here he practised his profession with great success for many years. In 1778 he was elected by the Legislature one of the delegates of Massachusetts to the National Congress. In November, 1794, he was elected a representative to Congress from the County of York, and was thrice re-elected to that office. March 5, 1801, he was appointed a Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court, by Governor Strong. On the separation of Maine from Massachusetts, in 1820, he removed to Newburyport, where he continued to reside till he resigned his office, January 1, 1824, soon after which he returned to Biddeford, and there died, April 6, 1824.

"Up to the latter part of 1809, he had uniformly spelled his name 'Thatcher.' But investigation led him to the conclusion that this was an incorrect mode of spelling his name, and about the beginning of 1810 he dropped the second 't,' and ever afterwards spelled his name 'Thacher.' His quarterly receipts at the State House for his salary as Judge, during all the years from 1809 to his resignation in 1824, have been personally examined by your correspondent, as has also his letter of resignation to Governor Eustis; and without any exception the signature to these papers is written 'Thacher.' I have also seen several letters written by him from 1816 to 1821, inclusive, in which the same spelling of his name is used.

"In regard to his religious opinions, it is stated in Folsom's History of Saco and Biddeford, in substance, that while he was untrammelled by the tenets of sects and fond of polemics, he was a believer in the Christian faith and a devout member of a Christian Church." — Eds.

being of the same nature with those of the sun and other heavenly bodies, the particles of which they consist will not be repelled by them more than by each other; so that upon their approach, they will only surround the two bodies to an equal distance. How could the atmosphere of the sun, for instance, drive that of a comet to such a distance, when no part of that of the sun itself is driven by the same power to a tenth part of the distance? But I think your hypothesis will stand clear of this objection, if you suppose, what I believe to be true, that the sun and the comets, as well as the earth, have *proper electric atmospheres*, by means of which they will be enabled to act upon their ordinary atmospheres at a considerable distance.

I rejoice much that philosophical knowledge is so much cultivated on your side of the Atlantic, and sorry I am that our attention to it will probably be called off to a struggle for power, the most unnatural and I fear the most fatal that men were ever engaged in.

I have of late been very much engaged in the prosecution of my experiments on different kinds of *air* and have had considerable success. I intend soon to publish a *Supplement* to the treatise which you very probably have heard that I have lately published on that subject. If there be any intercourse between the two countries at that time, I shall send you a copy, and shall be exceedingly glad to hear from you.

I am with great respect, Sir,

Your obliged humble servant,

J. PRIESTLEY.¹

HON. ANDREW OLIVER, JR., Salem, Massachusetts.

LONDON, 12 Feb. 1775.

P. S. L'd Shelburne desires me to present his most respectful complements to you.

¹ Joseph Priestley was born at Fieldhead, in Yorkshire, England, March 13, 1733. He entered the ministry in 1755, was a pastor for several years in Leeds and Birmingham, and to the end of his life was devoted to his profession. In 1766 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, and received the degree of LL.D. from the University of Edinburgh. On the anniversary of the storming of the Bastille, in 1791, a mob in Birmingham burned the meeting-house in which he preached, broke into his dwelling-house, and destroyed his library, manuscripts, and philosophical apparatus. In 1794 he came to this country, and took up his residence in Northumberland, Pennsylvania, where he died Feb. 6, 1804. His eulogy was pronounced before the French Institute by Cuvier. On August 1, 1874, a centennial celebration of the discovery of Oxygen took place in Birmingham, during which a statue of Priestley was unveiled; and a statue of him had previously been placed in the Museum of the University of Oxford in 1860. His theological and miscellaneous works fill twenty-five octavo volumes, and show his marvellous versatility and industry. The great variety of investigations in which he was engaged is pleasantly described in a *jeu d'esprit* by Mrs. Barbauld, under the title, "An Inventory of the Furniture in Dr. Priestley's Study." He wrote a biography of himself to the year 1795, which was continued to the time of his decease by his son. — Eds.

DEAR SIR, — I am desired by one Mr. Coghill a gentleman of Ireland to enquire whether you are willing to undertake the education of his son, who is between eleven and twelve years of age. I told him that I believed your terms were fifty pounds and to this he made no objection. I must beg the favor of an answer as soon as may be convenient.

I am sorry to find that you have lost Mr. Simpson as I am afraid you will not easily find another assistant so very agreeable. I wish much to see you, but that is a satisfaction I must despair of, unless it should, now and then, suit you to come to London when I am here. Pray what are you about? I know you cannot be idle any more than myself. Your spherics will do you great honor. I intend to make use of them in teaching Lord Fitzmaurice. And shall be much obliged to you if you would tell me what treatise of *conic sections* is the most proper for teaching, to one who will never make much of a mathematician but must have a general knowledge of all the branches of mathematics.

I would not omit this opportunity of sending you some *news* if I had any; but I hear nothing but reports and conjectures. It appears to me quite uncertain whether France has entered into any treaty of alliance with America, or not. General Howe, I believe, is coming home and Clinton will take the command. The Americans are in great spirits, and it is said are determined to attack the army at Philadelphia. The Ministers here are certainly in great distress. Lord North however has got the money he wanted from the Dutch and opens his budget on Wednesday next, and it is supposed the parliament will rise about Easter.

I am with very best respects to Mrs. Walker,

Dear Sir, yours sincerely,

J. PRIESTLEY.

LONDON, 2 March, 1778.

[Addressed, "The Rev. Mr. G. Walker,
Nottingham."]

DEAR SIR, — I recollect that the property of my *English Grammar* is not in myself, but the booksellers into whose hands it came on the bankruptcy of Mr. Johnson. He however has a store, and I have written to him, desiring that he would get your leave to print your edition. If you do not hear from him in a post or two, please to write to him yourself on the subject. It will be time enough to send you my *letter* to print with it, after the work is in the press. I did not give much attention to what you wrote on the subject; but I am confident I shall approve of anything that you shall do with respect to it.

I thank you for your *Communication* for the *Repository*, and shall insert it in the next number. As I have heard nothing from [name illegible] lately, I take it for granted that he is offended, and will contribute nothing more. There is no keeping on any terms with such people.

I thank you for your hint respecting my *large work*. Depend upon it I shall spare neith[er] *labour*, *expence*, or *time* in completing it. I shall probably begin to print in about six months.

I am glad to find by Mr. Tramblett that your future labour in teaching will be rendered easier without being less advantageous to you.

I am with every good wish in much haste,

Dear Sir, yours sincerely,

BIRM. 6 Jan. 1785.

J. PRIESTLEY.

[Addressed, "The Rev. Mr. Butland,
Exeter."]

SIR, — I hope you received a letter I wrote to you by Mr. Humphys of Birmingham, who is gone to settle in your country. This will be delivered by one of my own sons, who are following them. If they get a tolerable settlement with you, I propose to join them, and end my days with you. If I had not been so comfortably settled as I am, my library and philosophical apparatus nearly replaced, I should have accompanied them. Such is the increasing spirit of bigotry, bordering on that of persecution, that it is really very unpleasant and almost unsafe, for any persons who distinguish themselves for the freedom of their opinions, on political or religious subjects, to continue in it, and it seems to be the wish of the Court, and of the country in general, to drive us out of it. The number that, on this account, wish to go is hardly credible.

We have been alarmed with the apprehension of a rupture with your country but I hope there is wisdom enough with you, though not with us, to prevent it.

Wishing well to both countries, I am, Sir, yours sincerely,

J. PRIESTLEY.

CLAPTON, Aug. 21, 1793.

NORTHUMBERLAND, Aug. 25, 1794.

DEAR SIR, — I have now engaged a piece of ground on which to build a house, where I may pursue my studies without attending to anything else. For this purpose I want all my *packages* as soon as may be. My son will take measures with you for the purpose.

By what I hear in this place the affairs in the western counties wear a more serious aspect than you in Philadelphia are aware of. I fear a

civil war, and then I shall have got out of the frying pan into the fire. Would it not be better to give them up entirely rather than use compulsion, which may terminate as the war between Great Britain and this country, after doing much more mischief? Would not a tax on all lands cultivated or not be the fairest to satisfy all parties and prevent that monopoly by speculators that is so much complained of. Then upon lands reverting [to] the State the real settlers would have them on better terms. But I am no politician, I only wish the peace & welfare of the country I am come into.

Yours in haste, most sincerely,

J. PRIESTLEY.

P. S. I shall not dispose of my shares in the Navigation at so great a loss, but rather borrow money, if I can, to build my house, &c.

[Addressed, "John Vaughan, Esq.,
Philadelphia."}]

DEAR SIR, — I trouble you with my letters and commissions because they cost you nothing. The inclosed I wish you would take to Mr. Dobson, and tell him I shall be much obliged to him if he will print it in a quarter of a sheet, and insert it in the copies of my last *Discourses*, sending a number to England, and a few to myself hither. I write them in consequence of some objections that I find, by letters from England, are still made to the authenticity of Daniel.

I am very busy about my *Exposition of the New Testament*, and shall soon have recomposed what was lost at the riots. But as to the *printing* of this work, or my *Church History*, I must wait better times, or till I shall be able to supply the expence myself, which I shall do as soon as I shall be able. My other work on the *Institutions of Moses and other antient systems*, must also wait a while, though it is ready for the press. As this, however, is only one volume, I do not despair, with Mr Russell's assistance, to get it printed this summer.

I shall be glad to hear from you, and am,

Dear Sir, yours sincerely,

J. PRIESTLEY.

NORTHUMBERLAND, March 1, 1798.

P. S. I shall be obliged to you if you be so good as to correct the press.

J. Priestley will thank Mr. Thatcher when he sees Mr. Leishman of the Unitarian Society — to inform that J. P. will write to him in the course of 10 days.

NORTHUMBERLAND, March 10, 1798.

DEAR SIR, — If Mr. Dobson do not print himself, he can get the work done by another; and as he has the property of the *Discourses*, I did not imagine that he would have hesitated to be at a very small additional expence to make them more perfect. My bookseller in London, who was no printer, was always thankful for such improvements. If he still refuses, please to return the MS, and I will copy it and send it to London. I should prefer doing it here, because the conveyance of any thing to England must at this time be uncertain.

On second thoughts, I wish, in case of Mr Dobson's refusal, you would desire *Mr. Gales* to do it. I want only *fifty copies* for my friends; and please to take one yourself. Tell Mr. Gales I have received his letter, and am satisfied with what he has done. He will understand you.

Mr. Cooper of this place is in Philadelphia, and to be heard of at Mr Vaughan's, I shall take it as a favour if you will give him the inclosed paper.

I shall soon have transcribed my *Exposition of the New Testament*, as it stood before the riots; but as it was intended for a common congregation, though an intelligent one, I left out the *Revelation*. Having here abundant leisure, I think to do it also in the best manner that I can. It will make the work more complete.

I find that I cannot print any thing more at present in this country. I must wait better times, or send my MSS to England, when there shall be *peace*. But when will that be? I really think the present war will not end without the downfal of all the European monarchies, that of England (one of the horns of the beast) included.

I thank you for your endeavour to vindicate the Unitarians. My son says he believes the attack was from Mr. Abercrombie.

I am much concerned at the late news from France, and though a well wisher to the cause of that country, I shall very sensibly feel any injury done to England, or to America. I hope your resolves in Congress will be temperate. I wish I could make you all *Quakers* till the end of the Session.

Will you be so good as to inquire and inform me whether there be a glass house at Wales [or at] Kensington. I heard there was to be one.

With every good wish I am,

Dear Sir, yours sincerely,

J. PRIESTLEY.

DEAR SIR, — Knowing how much your time must be taken up, I ought not to trouble you as I do. I return the Paper corrected. My Copy of Josephus is *Whiston's Translation*, and the quotation right.

The Original I lost at the riots. As I find Mr. Dobson will not be at the expense of printing this Paper, take only 50 copies, and inclose six to *The Rev^d Mr Lindsey, Essex Street, London*, and six more, by another ship, to the *Rev^d Mr. Belsham, Hackney near London*. Keep what number you like, and give Mr. Dobson a few for those of my friends who have the work in Philadelphia, and send the rest to me by Mr. Vaughan.

I have finished, and transcribed, my Exposition of the *Revelation*, and have made some progress on that of *Daniel*.

The French, whose successes, like those of the Romans, appear to have made them, as they were at the time of Jugurtha, equally void of fear or shame, want to bully you out of a sum of money, but I do not think they will seriously go to war with you. I should think that suspending all intercourse with them [if] they knew themselves better, would best answer your purpose. They cannot hurt you here, and if the merchants will trust their property at sea, let it be at their own risk, and not involve the country. The consumer will pay, and much less so, and more equally, than by any tax for defence. This conduct of the French does not affect the *Constitution*, which does not differ essentially from that of this country nor the people at large. It is only the character of the people now in office who may change tomorrow; as it is to be hoped they will soon.

But if I meddle with your *Politicks*, I shall be more abused by P. Porcupine¹ than I am. I had hoped that living quietly, in a country to which I had always been a zealous friend, I might have been quiet in it. But the friends of your revolution are not so much in vogue at present as the old Tories, as far as I can see.

With every good wish to you and the country, I am

Dear Sir, yours sincerely,

J. PRIESTLEY.

NORTHUMBERLAND, Ap^l 19, 1798.

P. S. Please to send me a few copies of the printed Paper in a letter.

NORTHUMBERLAND, May 10, 1798.

DEAR SIR, — I thank you for your attention to my paper on *Daniel*, and wish you would send the number of copies that you have proposed to my Friends in England. I find by a letter just received from London, that they are under no apprehension about an invasion, but I think

¹ William Cobbett, of England, came to the United States in 1792 and settled in Philadelphia, where he edited a paper called "Peter Porcupine's Gazette." He afterwards published in London the "Works of Peter Porcupine" in twelve volumes, which had a very extensive sale. — Eds.

they make themselves too secure. Whether there be peace or war, there must be a revolution in that country.

The unanimity you speak of in this country does not exist in this neighbourhood. The gentry, indeed, are generally with you, but the lower classes those, who must take the field, had rather fight the English than the French. They do not so soon change their sentiments and habits as their superiors.

I have lately received from England an ingenious pamphlet of *O Tenors*, intitled *Thoughts on national insanity*, which, if you wish to see it, I will send you. I think it will suit this country as well as England. Guided by passion, more than reason, you are, I fear, going to bring a scourge upon yourselves. But it seems to be the method of providence to discipline, and ultimately improve, the world by the follies and consequent sufferings of men.

The post that brought me your last brought the inclosed which please to return. A great number of such letters I used to receive in England, and I have had some here.

Yours sincerely,

J. PRIESTLEY.

P. S. I have finished my Exposition of *Daniel* as well as the *Revelation*, and intend, at my leisure, of which I have abundance here, to go through the whole of the Old Testament.

While you are about to combat the French on the field, and on the sea, I am fighting them in the *laboratory*. I have no doubt now of demolishing their boasted new system of Chemistry.

NORTHUMBERLAND, May 31, 1798.

DEAR SIR, — My work is completely ready for the press, but my funds are not yet sufficiently ready, or explored, to begin the printing immediately. I have finished my *Remarks on Mr. Depuis's* elaborate work, and think to annex it to the other. Shewing a part of it to Mr. Aaron Levi, a Jew who has property in this place, he seemed much pleased with it, and said that he and his friends he hoped would undertake to print it. I am to draw out a general account of it to shew to his friends, and shall hear from him again on the subject. If they undertake it, he talked of employing a printer he did not name, who he said would do it cheap and well. I shall shew him Mr. Gales's terms, and get them to employ him if I can. Mr. Levi has farther invited me to be his guest while the work is in the press. If this take place, it will be sometime next winter; when I shall hope to have the pleasure of seeing you, if your new *alien bill* do not confine me, or send me out of the country. I have always been reckoned a dangerous man.

I have made the computation you desired of my *Exposition of the*

New Testament, and find that what I have written will make *four volumes* 8°, of 400 pages each, printed like the third edition of my *Observations on the Increase of Infidelity*, which is as close as is convenient. But as I wish to print along with it *A corrected Translation of the books*, the work will consist of *five volumes*. I would prefer my Notes on *Daniel* to those on the *Revelation*, on account of their mutually illustrating each other. But as there will be no demand for anything of the kind, especially in such times as you are preparing for us, it will be most advisable to suspend everything of theology till we have some prospect of *peace*, and this I fear is at a great distance. In the mean time, as I have abundant leisure, and nothing gives me so much satisfaction as the study of the scriptures, I shall continue my Exposition, whether any public use be ever made of it or not. I shall also employ myself in my laboratory; and as my present object there is *hostility to the French*, I think you ought to supply me with Saltpetre for my gunpowder out of your Arsenal.

It does not become an *alien* to say much about Politicks, especially in these dangerous times; but I should think that, much as you may approve the measures of your President, you must begin to think that his language is too close of copy of that of Mr. Pitt, and even of Peter Porcupine. It is not *statesmanlike*, not, I think, prudent even in a state of open hostility, much less during a negotiation for peace. If ever there be a restoration of harmony, his abusive language must be retracted, or suppressed. But I fear that the irritation must now be so great, that there cannot be any good understanding between this country and France while he is President. The late President would have used more caution, whatever he had felt, or intended. What can Mr. Adams mean by calling the French liberty *chimerical*. What then is that of America? The two constitutions do not differ in anything essential. They say too (but I have not read all his Answers to Addresses) that he laments the fall of the Pope. If he proceed much farther in this way I think his friends should send for Dr. Wallis from England. But your long letter, which I hope is on the way to me, may make me change this language.

In all events I am, Dear Sir, yours sincerely,

J. PRIESTLEY.

P. S. You may not have heard what I have from my banker in Paris, that the Directory have determined to pay off their whole debt the next year, by the sale of all national property in France, or the islands. I shall be glad if I get the half of what I have in these funds. Mr. Delacroix, when he was in office, promised me more than the whole if I would go and reside in France. It is possible that your measures here may make this step necessary. But fixed as I now am I shall remove with much reluctance.

DEAR SIR, — I thank you for the *Communication from the Envoys*, and like their *reply* very much. Dr. Ross also brought me *Mr. Necker's late work*, which I think very judicious, but I do not pretend to be a judge in these things. Time and Experience will be the best teachers.

I have just received a parcell of books from England, but not *all* that I have an account of, being sent to Mr. Vaughan for me. I wish therefore you would ask him whether he has received the following, which were delivered to the *brother* in London to be sent to him Feb. 24: *Jablonski's Pantheon Egyptiorum*, 3 Vols., & *Diodorus Siculus*, 7 Vols., in French *Asiatic Dissertations*, Vol. 3, and probably some *Newspapers*. If they be, I wish you would send them in small parcels, by the Stage coach from the Spread Eagle Market Street to the care of *Capⁿ Lee Harrisburgh* and I hope they will come safe, especially if any of the passengers will take some care of them, and the package be strong, so as to preserve the books from being chafed — I want the books above mentioned for my *Comparison of the Institutions of Moses with those of the Hindoos and other Antient Nations*.

I have completed my *Exposition of the Minor Prophets*, and am proceeding to the *larger*. Whether this be ever published or not, I shall continue it for my own satisfaction. No other studies or pursuits yield me so much.

Please also to take of Mr. Dobson, and send me by the above Conveyance, the *Medical Repository*, printed at New York, and sold by him. I hear it contains an account of my controversy with the Advocates for the French system of Chemistry.

I am, Dear Sir, yours sincerely,

J. PRIESTLEY.

NORTH^D 28 June.

NORTHUMBERLAND, July 5th, 1798.

DEAR SIR, — I am disappointed in your not sending me the *long letter* you promised me, as I do not see the impossibility of the same objects communicating the same ideas, and making the same impression on our minds, if we only go back to *common principles*, which in your case and mine cannot be very far; especially as we shall both be ingenuous, and one without personal prejudice. You will have the advantage of giving more attention to the subject which is constantly before you; whereas I seldom think about it. I only read the *Newspapers* once a week, and seldom any thing more than the articles of news. I have not even read any of your debates in Congress in all this session. But on this account I may view the subject with more coolness, and perhaps in a truer light. But what I may write in jest, I hope you will not take in earnest, or let any thing I write go beyond

yourself. For the times, I perceive, grow venous, and a man's whose thoughts only do not go with the current may be in danger.

I have now fully satisfied myself, and therefore I doubt not but that, in a sufficient time, I shall satisfy others, of the fallacy of the French theory of Chemistry; and shall be glad to make use of the *Medical Repository*, which in my last I desired you to send me, for the purpose of communicating particular experiments before I print another pamphlet on the subject. Indeed, I do not care to do this before I hear from the Chemists in France, in answer to my two last publications; and now I can have no intercourse with that country, probably for some years to come. But all events are in the hands of God, and will, no doubt, terminate well, and I will not distress myself about any thing future. There is a will that is above our, and that comprehends ours.

I am writing Notes on *Isaiah*. Having seen no more of Mr. Levi, I can give no account of the printing of the Work I mentioned. If I do print it I shall trouble you with the conveyance of the proofs, and I presume your utterings will from this time be nearly permanent, unless you empower the President to act according to his sole discretion.

With every good wish, I am, dear Sir, yours sincerely,

J. PRIESTLEY.

NORTHUMBERLAND, July 26, 1798.

DEAR SIR, — As I find by your letter that I can write to you without putting you to any expence, I will thank you for sending me the No. of the *Medical Repository*. It is the only part that I have seen of it, and I am glad there is such a thing in the country; as I have made many experiments of considerable importance, and wanted such a mode of communicating them before I write another tract on the subject. I am now perfectly satisfied that the new French theory of chemistry is altogether fallacious, and, though almost universally received, it will fall in a reasonable time.

In theology I have completed my *Exposition of Isaiah*, in which I cannot help leaning much to the Jewish mode of interpretation, in opposition to the christian. Having dispatched this, and also *Daniel* and the *Minor prophets*, I have little doubt but that, applying to the work as I do, I shall finish the whole before the next summer, especially if I do not go to Philadelphia, which, in the present state of things, it is advisable for me to avoid, even though I should have a friend to receive me there. Mr Vaughan expressed, I doubt not, a sincere wish to do it, but said he had not convenience.

In a letter lately received from Philadelphia my friend says, "I find your correspondence with some one in this city has been made very

public, and occasioned a good deal of notice of your democratic principles, which in the present season have irritated some persons not a little."

Now I have not written to any person in Philadelphia besides yourself, and I am sure you would not *intentionally* expose me to danger. However, I will take care to *send no more, lest a worse thing come unto me*. I find I am at the mercy of one man, who, if he pleases, may, even without giving me a hearing, or a minutes warning, either confine me, or send me out of the country. This is not a pleasant situation; and I apprehend my pleading the zeal that, in conjunction with Dr Price, I always shewed for the liberty and independence of America, would not avail me now. None of my friends of similar principles can now join me here. They would not, I presume, be allowed to land in the country.

I doubt not, however, but that all things will have a happy issue. Nations, as well as individuals, are in a state of discipline; and when suffering will be useful, the violence and folly of the governing powers are the most natural means of administering it. As to myself, I cannot suffer long. In all events, and with every good wish, I am,

Dear Sir, yours sincerely,

J. PRIESTLEY.

P. S. It will be time enough to begin to print my work when you return to Philadelphia. Indeed, it is as yet uncertain whether I shall be able to print it. When I last saw my friend the Jew he did not express so much zeal as he had done before, and he led me to conclude that though he *could* receive me into his house, it would not be quite convenient on account of circumstances in his family. I do not, however, doubt his good will, or friendship for myself.

NORTHUMBERLAND, Dec. 20, 1798.

DEAR SIR, — I am glad to find that you are returned to Philadelphia, and that you are not afraid to correspond with so dangerous a politician as I am; and as I have no correspondence with any other member of Congress, I shall perhaps be troublesome to you.

I have employed myself this summer very much in my laboratory, and have sent several articles of a chemical nature to the *Medical Repository*, printed at New York. Four of these, I hear, will be published in their two next numbers, and I have one more to send. The object of them all is to show the fallacy (as it appears to me) of the French theory. But I want to hear from the French chemists themselves, and when we shall have any intercourse with that abominable country you Federalists can tell better than I can. I suffer much in various ways for want of it. Who are the gainers I cannot tell.

I shall very soon print my *Comparison of the Institutions of Moses with those of the Hindoos, &c.*, in this place, at my own expense, and shall be obliged to my friends if they will take as many copies as they can dispose of, that my loss may be the less. But I shall not again propose to print any Works by *subscription* in this country.

My son, who expects to be in Philadelphia in about a week, will endeavour to make some agreement with Mr. Gales about the printing of my *Church History*, if he will take *land* which I have, instead of *money* which I have not. If this can be done, I shall be much obliged to you for transmitting the proofs, &c. But what can I do when you are not in Philadelphia, as the expense of postage will be very great?

When I wrote last, I think I had finished my Exposition of *Daniel* and the *Minor Prophets*. I have since that completed, and transcribed my Exposition of *Isaiah*, *Jeremiah*, and *Ezekiel*, and reverting to Genesis, have about half finished the Pentateuch. In the course of the next summer I hope to finish the whole. This will be a large work, and whether it will ever be published is very uncertain. But if not, I cannot employ my leisure more to my satisfaction; except, you may say, in disturbing peaceable kingdoms and States. But of my political publications I must not say anything to *you*.

Yours sincerely,

J. PRIESTLEY.

P. S. I wish you would send me the American edition, I see advertised in Brown's Newspaper, of the *Intercepted Letters* addressed to me; and any political intelligence you dare to trust me with.

NORTHUMBERLAND, Jan. 7, 1799.

DEAR SIR, — As you do not complain of the liberty I have taken, I shall trouble you pretty often in the same way. As my son has probably sailed before this time, I wish you would tell Mr. Gales that he agreed with Mr. Kennedy, the printer in this town, about the printing of my *Comparison of the Institutions of Moses, &c.*, and undertook to buy a quantity of type for the work, and that I have seen the paper maker, and have agreed with him for the paper; so that if, as he writes to Mr. Degrachy, he has made any agreement with Mr. Gales about the printing of the same work, he must have forgot what was done here, and what I think myself bound by. If he has agreed with him about the printing of the *Church History*, it is very well, and part of the copy shall be sent to Mr. Gales whenever he chooses.

You say you wish I were as zealous a friend of America as Mr. Hone is of France. Both Mr. Hone and myself, as well as Dr. Price and many others, were as zealous in the cause of America as he now is in that of France. If I had not been so, I should not have come hither,

nor am I changed at all. I like the country and the constitution of your government as much as ever. The change, dear sir, is in you. It is clear to me that you have violated your constitution in several essential articles, and act upon maxims by which you may defeat the whole object of it. Mr. Adams openly disapproves the most fundamental article of it, viz., *the election of the Executive*. But as you say, we cannot see our own prejudices, and cherish them as truths.

I may be doing wrong in writing so freely, and I have been desired to be cautious with respect to what I write to *you*. But I am not used to secrecy or caution, and I cannot adopt a new system of conduct now. There is no person in this country to whom I write on the subject of Politics besides yourself, nor do I recollect what I have written; but I do not care who sees what I write or knows what I think on any subject. You may, if you please, show all my letters to Mr. Adams himself. I like his address on the opening of the Congress, and I much approve of his conduct in several respects. I like him better than your late President. He is more undisguised. We easily know what he thinks and what he would do, but I think his answers to several of the addresses are mere intemperate railing, unworthy of a statesman.

My general maxims of policy are, I believe, peculiar to myself. When I mentioned them to Mr. Adams, he was pleased to say that "if any nation could govern itself by them, it would command the world." Of this I am fully persuaded; but he has departed very far from them. All that I can expect is the fate of the poet Lee,¹ who, when he was confined in a mad-house, and was asked by some stranger why he was sent thither, replied, "I said the world was mad, and the world said I was mad, and they outvoted me." My plan would prevent all war, and almost all taxes. But if the calamities of war, heavy taxation, the pestilence, &c., or any other evil, be required for the discipline of nations, as I believe that in the present state of things they are, they will be introduced from some cause or other. This country as well as others wants a scourge, and you are preparing one for yourselves.

With every good wish to you and your country, I am, Dear Sir (though an alien),

Yours sincerely,

J. PRIESTLEY.

NORTHUMBERLAND, Jan. 10, 1799.

DEAR SIR, — I sent you by Mr. Ecroyd *Mr. Belsham's answer to Mr. Wilberforce*, and by Mr. Humphreys *Mr. Hone's pamphlet*. They may both be had by inquiring of Mr. Vaughan.

¹ Nathaniel Lee, an English dramatic author, became insane and was confined in Bedlam, but he afterwards recovered his reason and was released. He died in 1692. — Eds.

I hope I do not take too great a liberty in inclosing *two open letters*, for your conveyance according to their directions. I know they must not be *sealed*. I wish to write in the same manner to a friend or two at a great distance, and whom I wish not to burden with the expense of postage, but I shall not proceed any further without your permission.

I am, Dear Sir, yours sincerely,

J. PRIESTLEY.

P. S. My daughter can bring back the pamphlets, but you may keep them as long as you please.

DEAR [SIR],—I fear I take too great liberties with you; but I wish to convey the inclosed to my son, and hope you will excuse it.

I am sending to the press my *Comparison of the Institutions of Moses with those of the Hindoos*, &c.; but shall not be able to print my *Church History* at present. Had not Mr. Vaughan been so unfortunate, I could have done pretty well. But though I have landed security for the money I had in his hands, which is all that I have in this country, these lands are uncultivated, cannot be sold for anything at present, and yield no revenue. I go on however to write in hope of better times, but I shall no more propose a *subscription* to anything.

I send by this post an article for the Medical Repository at New York, and once thought of troubling you with it; but on second thoughts have not. I have desired however Dr. Mitchell, my correspondent there, to send me some printed copies of what they print of mine to you to be conveyed under your cover.

I am, Dear Sir, yours sincerely,

J. PRIESTLEY.

NORTHUMBERLAND, Jan. 17, 1799.

P. S. Say nothing to anybody, of what I wrote about Mr. V. &c.

NORTHUMBERLAND, Feb. 14, 1799.

DEAR SIR,—If I had not had the most perfect confidence in your friendship, I should not have written to you as I have done on the subject of *Politicks*, knowing how very different your sentiments in that respect are from mine. I have no other correspondent to whom I mention the subject at all, and seldom think of it but at the moment of writing. My thoughts you may easily perceive are engaged other ways.

I am glad that you like Mr. Belsham's pamphlet so well. You may keep it, as I can get another copy. I should have added the article

you wish for to the *History of Corruptions*,¹ but I had little or nothing to say *historically* on the subject. I shall, however, attend to it, and endeavour to make a section to your mind.

I am quite ready to begin the printing of my *Comparison*, but fear we shall be delayed by the want of *type*. If you can do anything to forward it, I shall be much obliged to you. Be assured I shall never lose sight of the *exposition and corrected version of all the books of Scripture*, and the kind of illustrations that you mention will be very particularly attended to. Hitherto I have omitted nothing of the kind that has come to my knowledge.

I have just received a letter from Mr. Lindsey,² who mentions some *philosophical articles* that have been sent to me in the *Neptune*, *Capt. Joseph Saunders*. From the manner in which he speaks of this package, I conclude that I ought to have received it some time ago, whereas I have heard nothing of it, or of any advice concerning it, to Mr. Vaughan or myself. I shall be much obliged to you indeed, if you will be so good as to make the necessary inquiry concerning it, and if it can be found, see it lodged safe till I can send for it. Mr. Lindsey also mentions a *parcell* of *books* that he has sent me; but he does not say by what ship, and another *smaller parcell* that was sent with this letter, but does not mention the ship. This, however, must be one that arrived very lately.

I suffer much by these delays, and loss of parcells. If they lie at any public office, I fear they will be opened, and then it will be impossible for anybody to replace the articles without certain injury. Hitherto by Mr. Vaughan's interest I have been favoured, the packages being sent hither, and I then informing them of the contents. I hope by your means to have the same favour continued. It is indeed of great consequence to me. All my books and instruments must come from England, which alone is a great disadvantage that I must labour under [in] this country independently of other circumstances. Mr. J. Vaughan is at No. 63 Duke Street, but perhaps does not make his appearance.

I shall print my *Comparison* at all events, and be thankful for any assistance my friends can give me by way of lessening the certain expenses attending it. Whether I shall be able to print anything more in this country is uncertain. I shall certainly go to the utmost extent of my own funds. My *Philosophical Articles* will be printed in the *Medical Repository*, and cost me nothing. I am very busy in

¹ Priestley's "History of the Corruptions of Christianity," in two volumes, published in 1782, was burned by the common hangman in the city of Dort in 1785. — Eds.

² Theophilus Lindsey, an English theologian, was born in 1723 and died in 1808. A memoir of his life, by the Rev. Thomas Belsham, was published in London in 1812. — Eds.

that way, but this does not interest you. I often wish that this place lay in the way to Biddeford. It would give me great pleasure to show you my conveniences, which are beyond everything I ever had before.

Yours,

J. PRIESTLEY.

P. S. Perhaps Mr. Dobson will send us the small quantity of *Greek* and *Hebrew type* that we may want, if it cannot be purchased.

DEAR SIR, — Looking into my *Institutes*, I find I have said all that I know, and I believe all that is known about the *devil*, &c., in the way of *argument*. I should now only say that I believe, with Mr. Palmer (now in Botany Bay), that the *fallen angels* of Peter and Jude were the *descendants of Seth*, who perished in the deluge. See the *Theological Repository*, vol. 5, p. 166. As to an *historical* article, I could not find material for one. I often wish you were nearer to me, that I might get your perusal of what I am composing for the press. Here I am absolutely isolated. When the Congress shall remove to the federal city, perhaps you may sometimes include this place in your way, and spend a week or more with me. Otherwise I shall hardly see you any more. [word wanting] your affection for England, I wish you would learn their exactness in the conduct of the *Post-Office*. The last post brought us newspapers, but the *letter bag* was left behind. I expected a letter from Mr. Russell, and perhaps from you.

I wish you could get me the full *titles* and *dates* of the impression of Dr. [name illegible]'s *History of Indostan*, and *Holwell's Interesting Historical Events*. I had them from the Circulating Library in Philadelphia, and returned them without noting those circumstances, and I wish to describe them more circumstantially in my Preface, than I have done in my references to them.

I am, Dear Sir, yours sincerely,

J. PRIESTLEY.

NORTHUMBERLAND, March 1, 1799.

NORTHUMBERLAND, Dec. 12, 1799.

DEAR SIR, — Your letter was peculiarly welcome, for in truth, I was afraid you would have revolted at my *Politics*; as you are so violent a Federalist, and I such a democrat. Since, however, you could bear the *first* part of my letters, I will venture to send you the *second* by this post, and then you will know the worst of me.

The Porcupine's abuse had no effect on you, it had on many others;

and even in this part of the country I was generally regarded as a dangerous person. For in this country it is not one person in a hundred that knows anything of my writings, or my history. I was frequently called an *atheist*. Porcupine's paper was taken by all the most reputable federalists in these parts, and many I believe propagated suspicions of me that they did not entertain themselves.

Before I received your letter I had sent Mr. Dobson a copy of my *Comparison*, with directions that after he had looked into it (in order to judge whether it would be worth his while to take the impression upon himself or not), to deliver it to *you*; and I beg your acceptance of it. I have since heard that he declines having anything to do with it, except selling it on my account. This I wish to avoid, and another bookseller seems inclined to take it. I desire nothing for my trouble, but I wish to be *indemnified*, and to have as little as possible to do with the *sale*, as it is a thing that I should manage very ill. I should have preferred Mr. Dobson to any other bookseller, and I wish you would ask him to show you the letters I wrote to him on the subject. But do not solicit him to take it as a *favour* done to me. I do not like such obligations, and a bookseller, I well know, may get money when the author would be a great loser by the sale.

Mr. *Cooper's pamphlet* was sent, together with the copies of mine, to Mr. Campbell, bookseller in Market street, by a waggon which left this town yesterday, so that you may soon see them.

I have now completed my *Notes on all the books of Scripture*, without omitting even *Solomon's Song*, which at first I did not intend to meddle with, as there is nothing of religion in it. My *Church History* was finished long before; but these I believe must remain to be disposed of by my executor.

I have completed my experiments in defence of the doctrine of *phlogiston*; and having now heard all that has been, and I believe *can* be advanced against it, I begin the next week to print my *Defensive Treatise* on the subject; and I pretend to nothing less than a *demonstration* of the fallacy of the opposite new theory, though supported by almost [all] the chemists in Europe, and this country too.

If you dare trust me with any political information, I shall be glad to receive it.

Yours sincerely,

J. PRIESTLEY.

NORTHUMBERLAND, Jan'y 9, 1800.

DEAR SIR, — Having heard nothing from Mr. Dobson, and he having twice refused to have anything to do with my *Comparison*, I authorized a friend to dispose of it to Mr. Campbell, with whom the copies

now are. He reimburses me all my expenses about it; but without the exertions of my friends, I fear he will be a loser by it, not indeed finally (for if any theological work of mine be salable, I think this will), but in these times it will go off very heavily, and he may be discouraged. I shall therefore be much obliged to you and to my friends in general, if you will recommend it where you have opportunity, and I hope that Mr. Dobson will promote the sale as much as he can, tho' he did not chuse to take the expense of it upon himself.

Mr. Campbell takes my *Letters* as well as the Comparison. With respect to *this* I only ask your forbearance, and if you think I have offended, your forgiveness. Consider, however, how long I bore every species of abuse without any reply. What I suffered with respect to *character* in this neighborhood you cannot know. But in consequence of perpetual and uncontradicted accusations, I was generally considered as a dangerous person. In this respect I find that these Letters have been of great use, and I have reason to think that, in consequence of the candid account of my principles and conduct, I shall have no occasion to trouble the public with anything farther on the subject, tho' I find there are many Porcupines in this country, and with them my case is not at all mended.

I have lately received some valuable theological publications from England, which I wish you could see; but I have no opportunity of sending them, and several of them are now bound up with other pamphlets. They do not, however, contain any sentiments that would be *new* to you. But they are well written, and excellently adapted to *existing circumstances*, as the phrase now is.

I often wish I could see you in my *shed* as it is called. But it is too much out of your way in going or returning from Congress; and besides we have not yet any stage coach to this place.

With every good wish, I am,

Dear sir, yours sincerely,

J. PRIESTLEY.

DEAR SIR,—I truly admire the candour you express with respect to my *Letters*. It is more than I expected even from you, and I must say that with the Federalists in general, it is very uncommon. At least so I have found it in my own case. I am pretty well known to have been (at some risk to myself) a zealous friend to your revolution when I was in England. When here I never meddled with your Politics for five years, and yet no person in the country has been exposed to such outrageous abuse. As to the Federalists at a distance, I stand, as I expected, just as I did before. The virulence of Porcupine is taken up by other writers, but I have mended myself a little here, and with that I am satisfied; and I hope I shall have no occasion to give you, or them,

any further trouble in this way. It was with great reluctance that I did what I have done.

I shall thank you if you will tell me what you wished me to have *omitted* in the Letters, or anything in which you think I am *palpably* wrong. I do not mean to draw you into any controversy, but I will *think* of it.

Mr. Dobson has not acted like a friend with respect to the *Comparison*, and of my *Letters* which I did not mention to him, he says "*my friends are ashamed for me.*" I wish he would shew you my last letter to him that you may judge whether he had any occasion to write to me in that manner. I made him the offer of the *Comparison* three different times, desiring nothing but indemnification.

The *Layman's Answer to Wilberforce* is one of the pamphlets I wished to put into your hands.

I thank you for your good wishes with respect to my *Notes on the Scriptures*. They are ready, but when they will be *called for* does not depend upon *me*. I have just printed, except the Preface, a philosophical work, which I entitle, *The doctrine of phlogiston established and that of the composition of water refuted*.

You will wonder at my confidence when almost all the world is against me. But I have cautiously examined the ground, and think I stand very firm. I do not think the allied powers have now the same confidence in their contest with France.

I trouble you with the inclosed for Mr. Campbell, and am,

Dear Sir, yours sincerely,

J. PRIESTLEY.

NORTHUMBERLAND, Jan. 23, 1800.

NORTHUMBERLAND, Feb. 20, 1800.

DEAR SIR, — I trouble you with *two letters*, which I shall be much obliged to you to forward according to the directions. That to Mr. Baynham is somewhere *near Lake Champlain*, but probably you will be able to direct it better than I can.

I lately sent to Mr. Smith, by Mr. Campbell, some copies of a *chemical tract* in defence of the doctrine of phlogiston. Tho' you are not a chemist, you may perhaps find something to amuse, and I hope please, you in the Preface, &c.

I am now writing a *Dissertation on the knowledge of a future state among the antient Hebrews*. I have been used to think there were no traces of it in the Old Testament, but I now think they furnish me a demonstration of it. I wish I could submit it to your inspection. I shall transcribe it in a few days, and, if I have a good opportunity, will send it to you.

I shall be much obliged to you, and Mr. Vaughan, to take two copies of my *Comparison* of Mr. Campbell, and take the first opportunity of sending them as presents from me to Mr. Freeman of Boston, and Mr. Bentley of Salem.

With every good wish, I am,

Dear Sir, yours sincerely,

J. PRIESTLEY.

P. S. I thank you for the inclosures by the last post.

DEAR SIR, — I often lament that I am situated at so great a distance from you, and indeed from all liberal Christians. Here, as far as religion is an object, I find extreme bigotry. A few persons, however, chiefly young men, have read some of my small publications and have become Unitarians; but our society is on the smallest scale. I never before was so sensible of the value of the society of persons who have the same pursuits and the same principles. It is a great stimulus to exertions. Having, however, a habit of industry, I am not idle, and have lately printed, "*A Comparison of the Institutions of Moses with those of the Hindoos and other Ancient Nations.*" And by means of Mr. Vaughan or Mr. Thatcher, I shall send you a copy, of which I beg your acceptance, and if you can promote the sale of a few copies I shall think myself obliged to you. I have printed it at my own expense; but have some hope that a printer in Philadelphia will take the impression and indemnify me. I am very willing to give my labor, but I cannot do much more.

I am now writing a *dissertation on the belief of a future state among the ancient Hebrews*. I had been used to think there were no traces of it in the Old Testament, but I now think there are many, so as to amount to a demonstration. My tract on the subject will not be large, but I shall not be able to publish it here. I shall send it to England, but in these times the conveyance of manuscript is hazardous.

Though I do not neglect experiments, and have just printed a *defence of the doctrines of phlogiston*, my principal study is that of the scriptures, and I have now completed my "*Notes on all the books of the Old and New Testaments,*" as well as my "*Church History,*" but whether they will ever be published is very uncertain, but the longer I have them by me, the more I shall improve them.

Having been continually represented as a dangerous person, I have at length published my thoughts on the politics of this country, with the same freedom with which I have been used to treat all other subjects; but I have no wish to do anything more in this way.

I shall be glad to hear from you and especially to be informed of the state of Unitarianism in your parts. What are the numbers of

your own congregation and how many are there that may be called Unitarian in your neighbourhood?

With the greatest respect, I am, Dear Sir,

Yours sincerely, J. PRIESTLEY.

NORTHUMBERLAND, Feb. 20, 1800.

[Addressed, "To the Rev. James Freeman,
Boston, Massachusetts."]

NORTH'D, March 6, 1800.

DEAR SIR, — I thank you for the *Magazine* you sent me. It contains many valuable articles. I am also much obliged to you for *Mr. Webster's Letters*. I have no thoughts at present of writing anything more in that way, but I may be led to think and act otherwise.

I am sending my *Dissertation on the knowledge of a future state among the Antient Hebrews* to England. Mr. Lindsey will probably get it printed in some form or other.

I am engaged in a promising train of *experiments*, and everything in this way is much more expensive here than in England. But I cannot be idle. You see that rather than do nothing, I even write on politicks, of which you Federalist, will say I know nothing at all.

With every good wish I am, Dear Sir,

J. PRIESTLEY.

P. S. I take the liberty to trouble you with the inclosed.

NORTHUMBERLAND, March 20, 1800.

DEAR SIR, — I thank you for the *Tract on Prophecy*. Everything on that subject interests me much. I wish I could see the *other tract* that Mr. Winthrop mentions. Perhaps you can send it me from Boston.

I enclose a letter for *Noah Webster* and wish you would complete the direction, as I do not know where he lives. I wish also, you would read the letter, and if you think there is anything in it, that you would not have me to say to him, suppress it.

I wish you would read the *Dedication* and *Preface* to my late *tract on phlogiston*. If I had thought the subject interesting to you, I should have sent you a copy. I am busy about some important experiments. Were you here I would not despair of exciting your attention to other things besides *theology* or *metaphysics*, tho' these are certainly of the first consequence, and I give most of my time to them.

I am, Dear Sir,

J. PRIESTLEY.

P. S. Cannot you make this place on your way to the federal city, where I suppose Congress will meet the next year?

SIR, — I do not know whether you can forgive my neglecting to answer your obliging letter of so old a date as February, 1797; when I can only say that when I received it I was from home, and not at leisure

to write, and that I afterwards forgot it, and when I recollected it I was ashamed to acknowledge it. If you can, please to accept a pamphlet I take the liberty to send you on a subject that is very interesting to chemists. I have since that completed a course of experiments in pursuance of those on *the generation of air from water*, the result of which is that, by repeated freezing of the same water, I always get from it a quantity of air, and to appearance without any limit; so that the whole might be converted into this kind of air as well as by previously converting it into vapour. By this means the atmosphere may constantly receive an addition to this ingredient in its constitution, as the other part, viz, dephlogisticated air, is recruited by the influence of light on plants.

I thought I had had the volume of the American Transactions to which you refer, but I find I have no more than the first volume; but I have somewhere seen it, and I think Mr. Holyoake makes the difference of heat to depend upon the difference of purity in the air in different seasons. If so, he must be mistaken, for I find no sensible difference in the purity of the air at any time, or, indeed, between the air of this country and that of England.

I am not very well acquainted with the doctrines of *Galvanism*, but it should seem that the different metals are in different states with respect to electricity, though it is very extraordinary that this should be the case. This is a curious and important subject just opening upon us.

I have always heard a good account of Mr. Tytler, both as a man and a philosopher, but I have no personal knowledge of him.

I rejoice to find that in you that philosophy is joined to Christianity, from which it is too much separated. With me this is a primary object, and philosophy, much as I have attended to it, only a secondary one, as my writings here as well as in Europe will show.

Please to remember me respectfully to your honoured father, if, as I hope, he be still living. He is very obliging to inquire after my situation, and assure him that I find in this country everything that I expected from it, or that I wish for in this world. I have convenience and leisure for my pursuits of every kind, and I shall endeavour to make as much use of them as I can. I want only such things as must be had from Europe, and more early intelligence of what philosophers are doing there. But this inconvenience will be removed after the present war, which cannot, I think, continue much longer, shall cease.

With the greatest respect I am, Sir,

Yours sincerely,

J. PRIESTLEY.

NORTHUMBERLAND, April 3, 1800.

[Addressed, "B. Lynde Oliver,
Salem, Massachusetts."]

DEAR SIR, — I was much amused with the account of your being *taken in* by my treatise on *phlogiston*. For the future, mind the old adage *Fronti nulla fides*. However, if you get *anything* for your half dollar it was not wholly thrown away, and you will be wiser another time.

I have lately been reading *Robinson's History of Baptism*, and it has led me to put down some thoughts on the subject, which I shall probably reduce into the form of a *tract*, and send to England after the Essay mentioned in my last. But I want to examine one of Mr. Robinson's references to the Works of St. Austin. My set is not complete, one volume having been destroyed in the riots; and unfortunately the treatise referred to is in that volume. But *Austin's Works* I see are in the *Loganian library*, No. 84, Folio, in 8 volumes. I shall therefore be much obliged to you if you will consult it for me. Mr. Robinson says, p. 218, "Had he" (Austin) "forgot himself when he taxed the Pelagians with denying infant baptism;" and in the margin refers to the treatise. *De Peccatorum meritis*, Lib. 2, Cap. 25. This is the tract that my set is deficient in.

He has another reference to a treatise which I have; but it contains nothing to his purpose, and therefore I strongly suspect that the other does not. In other places Austin takes it for granted that the Pelagians, as well as all other Christians, allowed of infant baptism; and from this he draws an argument against them. Mr. Robinson had good sense, and a strong imagination, but he is not always to be depended upon, tho' he was far from intending to mislead his readers.

Some time ago Mr. Lindsey sent me *King's History of the Greek Church*, 4to., but having it before I sent the other to Mr. Dobson to sell for me, I wish you would inquire whether it be sold. It is a valuable work, and worth your having. I also sent him the 3d vol. of *the Transactions of the Philosophical Society at Philadelphia*, to have the 4th bound like it. Please to inquire whether it be done, and if so, let them be sent to Mr. Vaughan, who will send them hither the first opportunity.

Did you receive, and forward, my *Letter to Noah Webster*? I thank for your care of the others.

Yours sincerely,

J. PRIESTLEY.

NORTHUMBERLAND, Apr. 23, 1800.

P. S. *The Commentaries & Essays*, is a work that you should have. There are only four Nos. of the second volume printed.

MAY 10, 1800.

DEAR SIR, — I am sorry on your account, as well as my own, that you have forgotten your *Latin*; but certainly it is not now worth your while to endeavour to recover it. I am writing to Mr. Belsham, and I desire him to consult the passage for me. I now and then want books that I cannot get here, but in this situation I the more value those that I have, and read many that I should never have read in England, where I had greater choice, and I have found much advantage in it, so that some good results from every evil. I am now reading with much satisfaction *Bingham's Ecclesiastical Antiquities*, a learned and laborious work; but though I have long had it, I should never have done more than consult it occasionally, in any other than my present situation. For my philosophical pursuits I am nearly as well furnished as I ever was in England; but I want more early intelligence of what is doing there, and especially in France. I am much interested in the restoration of the intercourse with that country, and hope it will soon take place, unless the apprehension of a war with England in consequence of it should prevent it.

I am glad to hear you say that the *reign of terror* will probably soon terminate. If the *effect* cease, I shall not much mind the *cause*. On this subject, and the influence of France in this country, I differ from you *in toto*; but as it is not likely that anything that I could say would change your opinion on these subjects, I shall not trouble you with it. I believe your motives to be as pure as my own, nor can I disapprove what you say of *ignorant sincerity*; but we differ widely in the application of general maxims to particular cases. I thank you for the news from New York. My correspondents there are Dr. Mitchell and Chancellor Livingstone; but our subjects are altogether philosophical. I should not have known, from anything that has come from Dr. Mitchell, whether he was a Federalist or otherwise. I am glad, however, to find that he is on the *right side*.

When I look at the map, I do not think that your way to the Federal city by this place from New York is much longer than by Philadelphia. If so, I still flatter myself that you may look in upon me in going to or returning from Congress. The difference cannot be much. I would go further than that to see you.

In my last I mentioned our preservation from poison. Our physicians, however, say there was nothing but *tartar emetic* in what we took; and having examined what remained of the flour, I do not find any certain sign of arsenic in it; so that there is no proof that any serious mischief was intended.

I do not know what to think of Buonaparte, but I cannot help being apprehensive for the fate of England. By accounts from my son, the scarcity there approaches to a famine. The deaths in London are more

than ever was known since the great plague. All provisions are almost three times the usual prices, and yet they will not hear of *peace*. It is like that *infatuation* which, as Hartley observes, generally precedes destruction. My consolation is that *the Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice*.

Yours sincerely,

J. PRIESTLEY.

P. S. I have received no letter from Mr. Dobson. I am sorry that Congress is breaking up, as you will probably leave Philadelphia, if you have not already left it.

NORTHUMBERLAND, Aug. 8, 1800.

DEAR SIR,—I thank you for the valuable present of Mr. Tytler's treatise. It is a very interesting work, and I shall read it with particular attention, not only on account of the principal object of it, the investigation of the nature of pestilential disorders, but on account of the great mass of collateral subjects that I perceive he discusses, especially the doctrine of *heat*, concerning which I have long been unable to form any satisfactory opinion. When I have perused the work, I shall take the liberty to propose to him or to you any question that may occur to me on that subject, or any other that he has introduced. I see that in his account of plague in the Appendix, he has not mentioned the most extensive and fatal of any that we read of, in that of 1348, in the time of Petrarch, which seems to have swept off one-third of the human race.

Mr. Tytler's opinion in favour of my objections to the new theory, I think of much value, and I am well persuaded that the more attention is given to the subject, the more groundless that system will appear. Many I hear suspect it in England, and there has been a serious attack made upon it in France, but by whom I have not learned. We shall soon, I hope, have a communication opened with that country, and then I shall know more particulars. The want of it at present is a great obstruction to the progress of science, but this is no object with politicians.

My experiments on the perpetual production of phlogisticated air from water, both by means of a vacuum and by freezing, I think absolutely subversive of the hypothesis of the re-solution of water into inflammable and pure air. I have made both with the greatest care, and do not at present foresee that any sufficient objection can be made to either of them; their agreement with each other is a striking circumstance. Your objections to the new nomenclature are certainly very just.

The objections that Mr. Tytler makes to Count Rumford's experiments did not strike me at the time that I read them, but I shall now attend to it more particularly. I have not yet seen Noah Webster's

book on the plague, but intend to procure it. What do you and Mr. Tytler think of it? I wish we were nearer to each other.

I am, with my respects to Mr. Tytler,

Dear sir, yours sincerely, J. PRIESTLEY.

P. S. I have printed at my own expense a *comparison of the institutions of the Hindoos and other nations with those of Moses*. Could you assist me in the disposal of a few copies in your neighbourhood?

[Addressed, "B. Lynde Oliver, Esq.,
Salem, Massachusetts."]

PHILADELPHIA, 14 Feb. 1796.

MY DEAR SIR, — I have just returned from the Universal meeting house and I hasten to tell you I had the pleasure of hearing our friend Dr. Priestley. He came to this City on Tuesday evening, and though it was but sparsely known, or hinted that it was probable he would preach this morning, the meeting house was very much crowded; and I believe I may safely add — he gave universal satisfaction, for as I returned in the street it seemed as if every tongue was engaged in speaking his praise, or answering the clergy of the City. Can you believe it — not one of the regular clergy here had civility enough to invite him to preach, though he was some time in the City when he first arrived, or even decency to permit him, on request of his friends, to enter their pulpits to deliver a lecture!

Five years ago a preacher, who called himself a Unitarian, gave out that on a certain day he should deny and publicly disprove the Calvinistic idea of the Divinity of Jesus, in consequence of which declaration the room, which the preacher had engaged by contract for two or three months, was taken from him, and the door nailed up, and he was obliged to flee from the City. But now such a preacher is listened to with a pleasing attention, and attended by a thronging multitude. I predict that ten or a dozen years will extinguish most of this narrowness of mind; and though some of the clergy may act like the Scribes and Pharisees, in the time of Jesus, the great body of the people will think for themselves.

Yesterday I called upon the Doctor, and had considerable conversation with him. He keeps at Mr. Russell's — I had not seen Mr. Russell before. He inquired after you, and expressed a wish to settle near Boston. He says 'tis yet altogether uncertain where he shall make his final abode. He has a great attachment to the Doctor and wishes to settle as near him as he can. I joined him in pressing the Doctor to make a visit to New England, and I think we shall prevail. Mr. Russell says he really believes the Doctor, having come to a determination not to separate from his children, who are fixed at North-

umberland in this State, is afraid to trust himself on a visit to Boston, lest he should not be willing to return. I can't leave the Doctor yet — The Vice-President, Elsworth, Cabot, Sedgwick and many others, of both Houses of Congress attended him. Judge Preble, with whom I spoke after service, expressed himself in raptures — "Good God," said he, "what would I give to hear him as long as I live?"¹

His sermon was from these words in Proverbs — "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; but the fool," etc. — I have already said too much to permit me to say anything more than to add, this sermon is an introduction to a series of Discourses he means to deliver on the Evidences of Revelation.

Your friend and obedient servant,

GEO. THATCHER.

THE REV. JAMES FREEMAN.

The PRESIDENT referred to the second volume of Governor Hutchinson's diary, recently issued, which he characterized as one of the curiosities of literature. It relieves Hutchinson's character of charges which had unjustly been made against him, for he evidently loved his country and was governed by patriotic motives. The editor's notes, however, are often irrelevant.

Mr. C. C. SMITH, having been called on by the President, communicated an extract from the manuscript journal of the Rev. John Pierce, D.D., and said: —

It is well known to the older members of the Society that our associate, the late Rev. Dr. John Pierce, of Brookline, who was chosen a member in January, 1809, and died in August, 1849, gave to this Society his voluminous manuscript journal from 1806 to 1849. This journal contains many curious and interesting details; but much of it is of so personal a character that it ought not to be printed during this generation. Many things, moreover, which are recorded in it were not within the writer's own knowledge; and as he was not careful to verify what he heard, his diary, if it shall ever be printed, will need more than ordinary editorial care on the part of the Publishing Committee. But without entering further on the

¹ Mrs. Barbauld was so moved by Dr. Priestley's discourse on Habitual Devotion, that she wrote immediately after hearing it an impressive poem, entitled, "An Address to the Deity," which may be found in her Works, vol. i. pp. 84-86. — Eds.

discussion of this matter, I desire now to communicate an account of a journey on horseback to attend the commencement exercises at Providence and New Haven which young Pierce took in 1795, two years after he graduated at Cambridge, and when he was only twenty-two years old. As more than ninety years have elapsed since that time, and as he recorded very little which did not come under his own observation, there can be no impropriety in printing the fragment now communicated for that purpose. I may add that a portion of the journey was through the same places described in a diary of Samuel Davis, printed in the Proceedings some seventeen years ago.¹ Dr. Dwight, whose inauguration as President of Yale College is described, was the grandfather of the recently elected President of the College. The account of this journey is copied into Dr. Pierce's Memoirs at the end of 1843; but the internal evidence shows very clearly that, with the exception of two or three paragraphs and a few words in various places, it was written at the time when the journey was made.²

Journey to Providence & New-Haven, 1795.

On Tuesday, 1 September, 1795, I left my father's house, in Dorchester, on horseback, to attend Providence & New-Haven Commencements, in company with my friend, the Rev. Abiel Abbot,³ H. U. 1792, who had just been ordained at Haverhill.

The morning was cloudy. At XII we took an early dinner at Clark's, Medfield. About this time, it began to rain, and drove us frequently to shelter. We halted at Mann's Tavern in Wrentham, near the Meetinghouse, situated on an extensive plain.

At VIII in the evening, we arrived at Slack's, in Pawtucket, 43 miles from Boston. We remained here, the night, in company with Messrs Appleton and Tufts.

Wednesday, 2 September, notwithstanding the rain, we proceeded to Providence, and stopped at Tyler's Hotel, near the Baptist Meetinghouse.

¹ *Ante*, vol. xi. pp. 9-32.

² The notes to this paper, unless otherwise marked, are by Mr. Smith. — Eds.

³ The Rev. Abiel Abbot, D.D., was born at Andover Aug. 17, 1770, and graduated at Harvard College in 1792. After leaving college he was an assistant in the Andover Academy, and in June, 1795, was ordained minister of a church in Haverhill, which office he held for eight years. Subsequently he was settled for many years in Beverly. In the winter of 1828 he went to Charleston, South Carolina, and afterward to Cuba. He returned much benefited by the voyage, but died of yellow fever at Staten Island June 7, 1828. After his death a volume of his Letters from Cuba was published; and several of his occasional sermons are also in print.

At X, we attended the Commencement Exercises in this House. President Maxcy¹ presided. Dr. Stillman,² of Boston, offered the concluding prayer.

In the morning the audience was small.

P. M. the assembly was larger. Twenty-six were graduated. The compositions of the students were exceedingly florid. No figures were too bold to be used. The students were much dressed. The speaking was very declamatory. We dined with the College Officers and invited guests in the College Hall. The President asked the blessing. Dr. Hopkins,³ of Newport, Author of the Hopkinsian system, returned thanks. He was then 74 years of age. He looked, as if he were 100. President Maxcy, at the close of the Exercises, made a solemn Address to the Graduates. I saw Classmates Angier and Avery, & Professor, afterwards President Webber.⁴

I spent the evening at the room of Mr. Wiswell, one of the graduates, in sacred music.

Thursday, 3 September, visited various parts of the Town of Providence. An elegant Meeting house, with two Towers, after the Model of the Church, in Hollis Street, Boston, was lately erected, in which Dr. Hitchcock⁵ preaches.

¹ The Rev. Jonathan Maxcy, D.D., was born in Attleborough, Massachusetts, Sept. 2, 1768, graduated at Rhode Island College (now Brown University) in 1787, and died in Columbia, South Carolina, June 4, 1820. He was a tutor from 1787 to 1791, when he was ordained pastor of the First Baptist Church in Providence, and President of the College for ten years from 1792. In 1802 he was chosen President of Union College, Schenectady, New York; but he remained there only a short time, and in 1804 he became President of Columbia College, South Carolina, which office he continued to fill until his death. He published numerous sermons and addresses.

² The Rev. Samuel Stillman, D.D., was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Feb. 27, 1737. At an early age he was taken by his parents to Charleston, South Carolina, where he received his education. He was installed minister of the First Baptist Church in Boston Jan. 9, 1765 and died here March 12, 1807, from paralysis. He was a warm friend of Brown University, and is named in the act of incorporation in 1764. His printed discourses are quite numerous. Among them is one on Nicholas Brown.

³ The Rev. Samuel Hopkins, D.D., one of the most famous of the New England divines and a zealous opponent of slavery, was born in Waterbury, Connecticut, Sept. 17, 1721, and studied theology with Jonathan Edwards. From December, 1743, to January, 1769, he was minister of the church at Housatonic. In April, 1770, he was settled at Newport, Rhode Island, where he died Dec. 20, 1803. His greatest work, the "System of Doctrines contained in Divine Revelation Explained and Defended," was first published in 1793, and has been several times reprinted.

⁴ Charles Angier died in 1806, and John Avery in 1801. The Rev. Samuel Webber, D.D., was born at Byfield, Massachusetts, Jan. 13, 1760, and graduated at Harvard College in 1784. From 1787 to 1789 he was a tutor in the College; from 1789 to 1806 Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy; and from 1806 until his death, July 17, 1810, President.

⁵ The Rev. Enos Hitchcock, D.D., was born in Springfield, Massachusetts,

I viewed the improvements of Mr. Brown.¹ He has removed a Hill of about 83 feet in height into low land, to make a wharf, &c. He has a large Distillery, and fattens cattle from the remains of the grains, which have undergone the process of fermentation. He owns a large Wharf, at which lay an Indiaman of between 6 & 700 Tons.

P. M. we visited the Cemetery, two or three miles from the centre of the Town. It contains handsome Monuments, decent gravestones, and some elegant Epitaphs.

At V, P. M., we passed through Johnston, and arrived at Fish's, Scituate, where we spent the night.

Providence stands at the junction of Providence & Taunton rivers, and has the advantage over Newport by the superiority of its market. The buildings in general are indifferent, though some are elegant. The Baptist Church is one of the most elegant and spacious in the United States. It was built by [blank] Sumner,² father of Thomas W. Sumner, who has been an Architect. The College is a convenient brick edifice, commanding an extensive view of the surrounding country. They have a Theatre nearly finished.

Friday, 4 Sep. leaving Scituate, we passed through Coventry, and came to Dixon's, in Sterling, where we dined. This was taken from Volentown,³ and is the first Town in our course, in Connecticut, 26 miles from Providence.

Our conversation hither was on various subjects, and served to smoothe a very rugged road. In this region the soil is wretched. Fields of corn present a dismal appearance, amid a luxuriant growth of weeds, betraying a sad neglect of the scriptural declaration, "By the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread," &c. The Legislature of Rhode Island have granted a Charter for a Turnpike, on which \$6000 are to be expended, the proprietors of which are to be refunded by a Toll.

March 7, 1744, and graduated at Harvard College in 1767. He was for several years minister of the Second Church in Beverly. In October, 1783, he was installed as minister of a church in Providence, where he died Feb. 27, 1803.

¹ Nicholas Brown, second of the name, was born in Providence, Rhode Island, April 4, 1769, graduated at Rhode Island College in 1786, and died in his native town Sept. 27, 1841. He was the founder of the great mercantile house of Brown & Ives, and one of the most munificent patrons of the College, which, in 1804, adopted the name of Brown University. His public charities were large and numerous. He was the father of John Carter Brown, whose collection of books relating to America, known as the John Carter Brown Library, is almost without a rival on either side of the Atlantic.

² The Hon. Samuel G. Arnold, in his Centennial Discourse, May 28, 1875, says that Joseph Brown, a member of the Society, was the architect, and that James Sumner superintended the erection of the steeple. James Sumner is described in the Boston Directory for 1789 as a "housewright."

³ The correct spelling is Voluntown. It is a little town on the border line of Connecticut, touching West Greenwich in Rhode Island. Davis gives the name of the tavern as Dickson's.

From Sterling we proceeded through Plainfield, where are 2 buildings of brick & of stone, for an Academy, which is in a depressed state through want of funds.¹

From Plainfield we passed through a corner of Preston, where we refreshed ourselves with watermelons, at Frye's, 8 miles from Dixon's.

Passing through Lisbon, where the variegated prospects of hills and vallies, rich and barren soil presented themselves to our view, we arrived at the City of Norwich, one of the 5 Cities of Connecticut, after crossing various streams, which roll into the Thames. This City, 45 miles from Providence, is situated at the confluence of two rivers, which united take the name of Thames. It is well situated for trade, as the largest vessel can approach it from Long island Sound. The buildings are mostly indifferent. Braman's, where we lodged, is a large, square brick building, 3 stories high. I called on Mr. & Mrs. Mosely, from Dorchester, my former schoolmates.

Saturday, 5 September, leaving Norwich, at sunrise, we travelled to New London, 7 miles of the way, over a Turnpike, for which we paid a penny. The sides of the road abounded in grapes and peaches. We breakfasted at Pool's, New London, an elegant Tavern.

This City, bordering on the Atlantic, is well situated and improved, for merchandise. The buildings are mostly new, as the City was nearly demolished, 6 September, 1781, by the traitorous Arnold. We were told, that this miscreant was dining at the house of a hospitable gentleman, when his emissaries approached to set it on fire. In this City, they are more *federal* than at Norwich.

From New London, we passed through Lyme, over a ferry, called rope ferry, as the boat was towed by a rope.

Travelling 10 miles, we came to the mouth of Connecticut river, which is here nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ mile wide, and divides Lyme from Saybrook. The street here is wide and level.

Riding 8 miles, we came to Widow Crane's, in Killingworth, where we took lodging's.

Lord's day, 6 September, We attended Killingworth meeting, and heard the Rev. Achilles Mansfield² preach from II Tim. II. 8. "Remember, that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David," &c. It being Communion day, our hostess having spoken to her minister, on the subject, we were, by vote of the Church, invited to unite in the Ordinance of the large [Lord's?] Supper, in a large and respectable Body of communicants.

¹ The Academy was incorporated in 1784, and is still in existence, with a lady as principal.

² The Rev. Achilles Mansfield graduated at Yale College in 1770, and not long afterward was ordained minister of Killingworth, where he remained until his death in 1814, at the age of sixty-three. He was a Fellow of the College from 1808 to his death.

P. M. my friend Abbot officiated to great apparent acceptance. Text, Romans I. 16. "I am not ashamed," &c. The Assembly was large and respectable, and gave us fine music.

After service, we passed the remainder of the day, and took tea, at Mr. Mansfield's.

The wife of Mr. Mansfield was mother of Mrs. Joshua Huntington, whose husband was minister of the Old South Church, Boston, and whose life has passed through several editions, here, and in Great Britain. She was then so young a child, that I retain no recollection of her [Jan. 1844].

It is observable, in all the maritime Towns, through which we passed, that great attention is paid to the building of ships, and smaller craft. This is 11 miles from Saybrook.

Monday, 7 September, in the morning, we were detained by rain, of which a great abundance has fallen, this season. The freshets have carried away many bridges; and much harm has been done to the crops by the redundancy of rain.

Dining on Tautog [Blackfish] we started with Mr. Clark Brown,¹ candidate at Machias, and rode, in the rain, through East-Guilford, West Guildford, Bradford, and came to East-Haven, and spent the night, in the same house with President Maxcy, with poor accommodations.

Tuesday, 8 September, We left East Haven, a little after sunrise, and came to New-Haven, dripping with rain. We took lodgings at Parmele's, a very good Tavern. The rain continued till noon.

P. M. we heard part of a sermon by Dr. Edwards,² in which he attacked Dr. Priestley on the immateriality of the soul.

P. M. I attended the inauguration of the Rev. Timothy Dwight, D.D.³

¹ The Rev. Clark Brown was settled as a Congregational minister in Machias, Maine, in 1795, and in Brimfield, Massachusetts, in 1798. Afterward he became an Episcopalian, and was settled in William and Mary Parish, Maryland, where he died Jan. 12, 1817. He received the degree of A. M. from Yale, Dartmouth, Brown, and Harvard; but he was not a graduate of either college.

² This was the second Jonathan Edwards, son of the famous metaphysician. He was born in Northampton May 26, 1745; graduated at New Jersey College in 1760; from 1769 to 1795 was minister at White Haven, Connecticut; in 1796 minister of the church in Colebrook, and from 1799 until his death, Aug. 1, 1801, President of Union College, Schenectady, New York.

³ The Rev. Timothy Dwight, D.D., was born in Northampton, Massachusetts, May 14, 1752, and was educated at Yale College, where he graduated in 1769. From 1771 to 1777 he was a tutor in the College, and from 1795 until his death, Jan. 11, 1817, he was its President. During the Revolutionary War he was for one year a chaplain in the army. In November, 1783, he was ordained over the church at Greenfield, Connecticut. He was a man of great learning and ability, and a voluminous writer. Among his best-known works are his "Theology Explained and Defended," in 5 vols. 8vo, two volumes of "Sermons," four volumes of "Travels in New England and New York," and his two poems entitled "The Conquest of Canaan" and "Greenfield Hill."

as President of Yale College. Dr. Eliphalet Williams,¹ first offered a short and pertinent prayer. Dr. Dwight then made the usual confession of faith, in such cases provided. In a Latin Address Dr. Williams invested in the President the rights and privileges pertaining to the office. The ceremony was concluded by a Latin Address from the new President. In the evening, there was an illumination of 8 candles to each window.

Wednesday, 9 September, This morning was ushered in by the loud discharge of a cannon, immediately under my window. As I was unacquainted with the custom, and in a deep sleep, nothing can exceed the consternation, into which I was at first thrown. It seemed, as if the earth shook from its centre, and the foundation of the hills was removed. A fit of trembling seized me, and tears bedewed my cheeks. My first impression was, that the end of all things was assuredly come; and that I should immediately be called to give an account of the deeds done in the body. The ringing of the bells and maturer reflection relieved my fears.

At XI, A. M. the Commencement Exercises took place in Dr. Dana's² Church.

President Dwight prayed.

Next succeeded a Funeral Anthem by the students, which was followed by a Funeral Oration on Dr. Stiles,³ last President of the College, by Professor Meigs,⁴ a gentleman, who, but just before, declared in the hearing of a Class, in the College, that he wished to God, that the Treaty, which John Jay had just negotiated with Great-Britain had

¹ The Rev. Eliphalet Williams, D.D., was born at Lebanon, Connecticut, Feb. 21, 1727, graduated at Yale College in 1743, ordained minister of the church at East Hartford in March, 1748, and died in 1803.

² The Rev. James Dana, D.D., was born in Cambridge May 11, 1735, and graduated at Harvard College in 1753. He was ordained at Wallingford, Connecticut, Oct. 12, 1758, and remained there for thirty years, notwithstanding a protracted controversy which originated in some irregularity connected with his settlement. In April, 1789, he became minister of a church in New Haven, which office he retained until the latter part of 1805. He died in New Haven, Aug. 18, 1812.

³ The Rev. Ezra Stiles, D.D., was born in New Haven Dec. 15, 1727, and died there May 12, 1795. He graduated at Yale College in 1746; was tutor from 1749 to 1755, and President of the College from June, 1778, until his death. He was a man of great and various learning, and was one of the foremost figures of his time; but he is now best known as the author of a "History of Three of the Judges of King Charles I." One of his daughters married the Rev. Abiel Holmes, D.D., who was afterward his biographer; and another daughter was the mother of the Rev. Ezra Stiles Gannett, D.D.

⁴ Josiah Meigs graduated at Yale College in 1778. From 1781 to 1784 he was tutor, and from 1794 to 1801 Professor of Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, and Astronomy. Afterward he was President of Columbian College, Washington, District of Columbia. He died in 1822.

been, instead of this, a declaration of perpetual hostility with our mother country!!!

The Exercises of the students, which succeeded, were performed to good acceptance. Two Orations, one on Capital Punishments, and the other on Commerce were performed by Mess^{rs} Cooley & Marchant,¹ candidates for the second degree. The Meeting house was not crowded. The greatest decorum was observed. There was no clapping. The students were handsomely dressed. They had more gestures, than are common at Cambridge. Perhaps their compositions would have been more chaste, had they enjoyed the criticisms of Professor Pearson.²

A prayer by the President; and an Anthem, "I beheld, and lo! a great multitude," &c. by Jacob French, an illiterate day-laborer, was performed in the most boisterous and tasteless manner imaginable by the students.

The President, in giving the Degrees, was obviously embarrassed; and, as he had not perfectly committed the Latin form to memory, he made frequent blunders in reciting it.

We dined with the College Faculty.

In the evening, I heard the "Concio ad Clerum," by the Rev. Achilles Mansfield, of Killingworth, before mentioned, from Daniel XII. 4. "They that be wise, shall shine," &c.

Thursday, 10 September, the Rev. John Marsh,³ of Weathersfield, introduced us to Dr. Dana, minister in the City, who treated us with great politeness. Under the accumulated weight of misfortune and hard duty he appears to be fast decaying, and tottering on the verge of the grave. After an hour's call, we took an affectionate leave of the Doctor.

The City of New Haven is laid out on a very regular plan. The land is level. The streets are wide and straight, and cross each other at right angles. In the centre is a spacious square, the sides of which

¹ The Rev. Timothy Mather Cooley, D.D., a descendant from Increase Mather, was born in East Granville, Massachusetts, March 13, 1772, and graduated at Yale College in 1792. He was ordained minister of a church in his native town Feb. 3, 1796, and continued its pastor until his death, Dec. 14, 1859; but during the last five years he had the help of a colleague. His classmate, William Marchant, died in 1857.

² The Rev. Eliphalet Pearson, LL.D., was born in Newbury, Massachusetts, June 11, 1752, and graduated at Harvard College in 1773. He was Hancock Professor of Hebrew and Oriental Languages from 1786 to 1806, and was also instructor in grammar and rhetoric. On the establishment of the Andover Theological Seminary he was appointed Professor of Sacred Literature, which office he held for only a short time. He was a member of the Historical Society from January, 1800, to August, 1810, when he resigned. He died at Greenland, New Hampshire, Sept. 12, 1826.

³ The Rev. John Marsh, D.D., was born at Haverhill, Massachusetts, Nov. 2, 1742, O.S., graduated at Harvard College in 1761, settled at Wethersfield in January, 1774, and died Sept. 13, 1821.

are formed by the Colleges, Churches, and other buildings. The University consists of an old and a new College, a Chapel between them with a steeple and bell, and a small dining hall. The Churches are a large brick building, in which Dr. Dana preaches, two churches painted white, in one of which Dr. Edwards lately preached. The other has had no pastor, since the Rev. Samuel, afterwards Dr., Austin.¹ Near these is an Episcopal Church. The beauty of the green is greatly impaired by the Burial ground² in the centre, which, it is contemplated, to hide from public view by weeping willows. The City is said to contain 450 houses and 5,000 inhabitants. It is now attacked by Dysentery, which proves very mortal to young people. Last week, 27 died by this malady.

New Haven can never be a flourishing commercial City from two causes. It is difficult of access to vessels; and it has but an indifferent market.

In this, as in almost all other parts of Connecticut, through which we passed, the newest houses have no caps to the windows and doors. They have piazzas in front, or on their sides; and their roofs are generally sharp.

This City is now federal in its politics.

Thursday, A.M. at XI, 10 September, we left New Haven with the Rev. Abiel Abbot,³ of Coventry; and passing through North Haven, the upper Parish of Bradford, and Durham, we arrived at Middletown, and stopped at Canfield's. This is the IVth City in Connecticut. Their order is Hartford, New Haven, New London, Middletown, and Norwich. The streets are wide, straight, level, at right angles to each other, as at New Haven. The principal street is parallel with the river. There is an appearance of considerable trade, as there are several wharves. Their churches bear an ill proportion to their other

¹ The Rev. Samuel Austin, D.D., was born in New Haven, Connecticut, Oct. 7, 1760, and graduated at Yale College in 1783. He was ordained pastor of the Fairhaven Church Nov. 9, 1786, and dismissed Jan. 19, 1790. Afterward he was for many years minister of the First Church in Worcester. In 1821 he went to Newport, Rhode Island, to take charge of the church once under the care of Dr. Hopkins, but in 1825 returned to Worcester. He died in Glastonbury, Connecticut, Dec. 4, 1830.

² Since removed. [*Note by Dr. Pierce.*]

³ The Rev. Abiel Abbot, D.D., a cousin of Dr. Pierce's travelling companion, was born at Wilton, New Hampshire, Dec. 14, 1765, graduated at Harvard College in 1787, and died at West Cambridge (now Arlington), Massachusetts, Jan. 31, 1859. After graduating he was for a short time a teacher in Phillips Academy, and for one year Greek tutor at Cambridge. He was ordained minister of Coventry, Connecticut, Oct. 28, 1795, and dismissed, on account of differences of theological opinion, in 1811. Subsequently he was principal of Dummer Academy, and minister at Peterborough, New Hampshire. He was the author of a History of Andover, and also published the Abbot Genealogy.

buildings, as they are small and inelegant. Their Court House resembles a Friends' Meetinghouse; and their Gaol you might easily mistake for a slaughter house. In short, from the appearance of their houses of worship, there seems an aptness in the observation of a plain man, whom we met in the neighborhood, that the people of Middletown have more money, than grace. More shipping, it is said, is owned here, than in any other city, in this State. It is 27 miles from New Haven.

Friday, 11 September, leaving Middletown, we travelled, northward, on a road parallel with Connecticut river on the West. The views of the river, on the right, and the fertile land and fine farms on the left were incomparably beautiful.

Riding eleven miles, we came to Weathersfield, a town of a very rich soil, and noted for raising onions. Much of the land is intervale. The streets are wide and level. While I was contemplating the beauties of the scene, my horse fell flat on his belly; and I walked over his head.

The inhabitants thrive by the culture of onions. It is humorously said, that the females, quitting their usual employments of the needle and the distaff, think it not beneath them to cultivate with their own hands their staple commodity; and that they make their knees callous by kneeling to weed onions.

There is an air of elegance in their buildings. Their Meeting house is spacious and convenient. It is of brick, with a foundation of free stone, and has a high steeple.

We dined at the Rev. John Marsh's with the Rev. Josiah Whitney,¹ of Brooklyn, Conn. & the Rev. Mr. Backus² and lady, of Somers.

At IV, we rode to Hartford, 4 miles, on a fine road. This most elegant City in the State is on the Western bank of the river, 40 miles from the Ocean; and is navigable for vessels of 160, and sometimes 200 tons. Could larger vessels approach it, this city might become the Emporium of the Western world, as the soil, in its immediate neighborhood, is exceedingly fertile. Notwithstanding the disadvantages, under which they labor, the inhabitants have a brisk trade. Their buildings are far superior to any others in the State. Their Meetinghouses are not large, but neat. They have a State House, in forwardness, which excites the suspicion in some, from its magnificence, that it is contemplated by some to make this a Capitol, should there be a division of the Northern from the Southern States. It is 150 feet long, 50 feet wide,

¹ The Rev. Josiah Whitney, D.D., was graduated at Yale College in 1752, settled at Brooklyn, Connecticut, and died in 1824, aged ninety-three.

² The Rev. Charles Backus, D.D., was born in Norwich, Connecticut, Nov. 5, 1749, and graduated at Yale College in 1769. He was minister of the church in Somers from August, 1774, until his death, Dec. 30, 1803. He published an Historical Discourse on the town of Somers in 1801.

and 50 feet high. Twenty feet from the foundation are of stone, the rest of brick.¹

Their Gaol is a three story, square, brick building, the dungeon of which is in the highest story, instead of the lowest, as usual.

The Theatre is of wood, which more resembles a Barn, than any other building. We were told, that many in the City had a great rage for plays; that some who had just lost friends, and others whose nearest relatives were groaning on beds of sickness, would flock to the Theatre.

Sat. 12 Sep. We dined with the Rev. Nathan Strong,² a rival of President Dwight, as an eminent divine. Rev. Simeon Doggett,³ now of Raynham, Mass. then Tutor in Brown University, & candidate preacher, was present, who, hearing so many witty expressions from Mr. Strong, took it for granted, that he had the same liberal notions in Christianity with himself. But he was soon convinced of his mistake by broaching some of his peculiarities, and was accordingly glad to retreat to the discussion of subjects, on which there was a greater union of sentiments.

Mr. Strong was nevertheless a cheerful and social [man?] and treated us with great hospitality. The Dysentery prevailed at Hartford also, though less mortal, than at New Haven. Calvin Whiting, H. U. 1791, candidate preacher, at this time, lay sick of the disorder, of which he soon after died.

P. M. crossing Connecticut river, we left Hartford, and passing through East-Hartford and Bolton, we came to Coventry, 22 miles from Hartford and 60 from New Haven, and took lodgings with Rev. Abiel Abbot, H. U. 1787, minister of the place.

¹ Davis, writing in 1789, mentions the State House as a wooden edifice opposite to Bull's, a famous inn at which he lodged, and which was the starting-place for numerous lines of stage-coaches.

² The Rev. Nathan Strong, D.D., was born in Coventry, Connecticut, Oct. 5, 1748, and graduated at Yale College in 1769. In 1772 and 1773 he was a tutor in the college. He was ordained minister of the First Church in Hartford Jan. 5, 1774, and died there Dec. 25, 1816. During the Revolutionary War he warmly espoused the popular cause, and was a chaplain in the army. In 1796 he published a volume on "The Doctrine of Eternal Misery consistent with the Infinite Benevolence of God," and was the author of numerous other theological publications.

³ The Rev. Simeon Doggett was born in Middleborough, Massachusetts, March 6, 1765. He graduated at Rhode Island College in 1788, and after acting as tutor for several years, took charge of an academy at Taunton in 1796. At this time he studied for the ministry, and preached in the vacant pulpits in the neighborhood. From 1815 to 1831 he was settled as minister of the church in Mendon, and from the latter year to 1846 as minister of the church in Raynham. He died in that place March 20, 1852. His parents were Episcopalians, but in early manhood, and long before the separation in the Congregationalist body, he "became a Unitarian by conviction," to use his own words.

Lords day, 13 September, I attended Coventry meeting. The companion of my journey, Rev. Abiel Abbot, H. U. 1792, cousin and afterwards brother-in-law of his namesake, preached to a highly attentive audience, A. M. from Psalm XIX. 11. "In keeping them there is great reward."

P. M. from Mat. XXV. 21. "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord;" on the present and future rewards of religion. In the evening, we called at Judge Root's,¹ who, finding that Mr. Abbot was not a Calvinist, in process of time, pursued measures, which led to his dismissal.

Monday, 14 September, at IX. A. M. from Coventry we passed through Tolland, where we called on Rev. Dr. Williams.² Crossing Willowmantic river, we passed through Willington and then Stafford, and called on Mr. Willard,³ the minister, brother to the President of Harvard University. Hence we travelled through South-Brimfield into Brimfield, where we stopt for the night, 29 miles from Coventry. We had a restless night, on account of the heat, and a nauseous smell in our bed.

Tuesday, 15 September, We came to my brother's-in-law, Rev. Stephen Baxter,⁴ of Western, where we breakfasted and dined, and spent our time agreeably with the family, and Capt. Lovell and wife, of Medway.⁵

At IV P. M. we started for Leicester, on passing through Brookfield, we called on Rev. Dr. Fiske,⁶ and, in Spencer, on the Rev. Joseph

¹ Jesse Root was born in Coventry, Connecticut, in January, 1737, graduated at New Jersey College in 1756, and died in his native place April 5, 1822. After graduating, he preached for three years, and then adopting the profession of the law was admitted to the bar in 1763. He was a delegate in Congress from 1778 to 1783, and was appointed a judge of the Supreme Court of his native State in 1789. He was Chief Justice from 1796 to 1807. He was afterward a member of the Legislature.

² The Rev. Nathan Williams, D.D., son of the Rev. John Williams, of Deerfield ("The Redeemed Captive"), was born in 1735, graduated at Yale College in 1755, and died in Tolland April 15, 1829. He was minister of the church in that place for sixty-nine years.

³ The Rev. John Willard, D.D., graduated at Harvard College in 1751, and died Feb. 16, 1807, aged about seventy-six.

⁴ The Rev. Stephen Baxter was born in Medfield, Massachusetts, Aug. 31, 1671, according to one account, or September 1, according to another, graduated at Harvard College in 1788, and was ordained minister of the Congregationalist Church in Western (now Warren), March 9, 1791. He was dismissed in 1804, and died in Warren Feb. 10, 1846. During the last ten years of his life he seldom or never left his house.

⁵ Dr. Pierce was twice married. His first wife, to whom he was married Oct. 31, 1798, was Abigail Lovell, of Medway. She lived only a short time, and, May 6, 1802, he was married to Lucy Tappan, of Northampton, who survived him, and died Feb. 12, 1858.

⁶ The Rev. Nathan Fisk, D.D., was born in Weston, Massachusetts, Sept. 20, 1733, and graduated at Harvard College in 1754. He was ordained pastor of the

Pope;¹ and arrived at Leicester, at VIII $\frac{1}{2}$ in the evening, where I spent the night with my good friend, Preceptor Adams.² I found here Theodore Dehon,³ H. U. 1795, afterwards Bishop of South-Carolina, my successor, as Assistant-Preceptor in the Academy.

Wednesday, 16 September, Called on several friends, and at IX, A. M. journeyed for Medway. We dined at Davis's, in Northborough.

In the evening, passing through Holliston, on a very blind road, it being very dark, my horse, for the second time, this journey, stumbled, and threw me with violence on my breast. My first apprehensions were alarming, as with difficulty I arose, and regained my breath. I was however thankful, that no bone was broken. This was not the end of trouble. Though we took a guide through the worst of our way, we were bewildered in the woods and with great difficulty found our way to the hospitable mansion of Capt. Lovell, at VIII $\frac{1}{2}$ in the evening, with grateful hearts for our preservation.

Thursday, 17 September, Spent the day at Medway. Mr. Abbot went to Dorchester.

Friday, 18 September, joined him at Esq. Wales's.

Sat. 19 September, After accompanying the Wales family to Dorchester point, I dined with them, & returned to my father's, P. M. after an absence of 19 days.

The Hon. ROBERT C. WINTHROP then spoke as follows :

I can add nothing, Mr. President, to what has been said of the letters of Dr. Priestley. He was a correspondent of Governor Bowdoin, who commended to his friendly care the younger James Bowdoin, when he went over to study at Oxford, after taking his degree at Harvard in 1771. But I

Third Church in Brockfield May 28, 1758, and died Nov. 24, 1799. He was a contributor to the "Massachusetts Spy," and printed several historical addresses and other essays or sermons.

¹ The Rev. Joseph Pope was born at Pomfret (now Brooklyn), Connecticut. He graduated at Harvard College in 1770, was ordained to the ministry July 17, 1773, and died March 8, 1826, aged seventy-nine.

² Ebenezer Adams was born at New Ipswich, New Hampshire, Oct. 2, 1765, and graduated at Dartmouth College in 1791. From May, 1792, to July, 1806, he was principal of Leicester Academy, and from 1809 to 1833 a professor in Dartmouth College, — first of the Greek and Latin Languages, and afterward of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy. He died at Hanover, New Hampshire, in August, 1841.

³ Theodore Dehon, D.D., was born in Boston Dec. 8, 1776, and graduated at Harvard College in 1795. In 1798 he became rector of Trinity Church, Newport, Rhode Island, and in 1809 rector of St. Michael's Church, Charleston, South Carolina. In October, 1812, he became Episcopal Bishop of South Carolina. He died in Charleston, Aug. 6, 1817.

have found no Priestley letters among the Bowdoin Papers. It may be interesting, however, in this connection, to mention the fact that the late Henry H. Richardson, the eminent architect, whose recent death has been so deeply lamented, is stated to have been a great-grandson of Priestley.

Passing from this topic, let me say how glad I am to find myself at another social meeting of our old Society at Cambridge. We have had many social meetings elsewhere in former years; I hope we may have many more of them in future years. We have had them at Brookline; we have had them in Boston; and one of them was held at Nahant, under the auspices of the "Ice-King," as he was sometimes called, — our associate, the late Frederic Tudor, — when Prescott was able to drive over and join us from his villa on the Lynn shore, and when Sparks came down to give us the earliest account of the tour in Europe from which he had just returned.

But our meetings here in Cambridge — of which this, I believe, is the third — have been peculiarly notable. One of them was at Longfellow's on the 17th of June, 1858, when our charming poet received us so hospitably in the old Craigie Mansion, in which Washington had resided on taking command of the Army of the Revolution, and when Edward Everett and Charles Francis Adams and Chief Justice Shaw — to name no others — told us so many interesting anecdotes connected with the place and date of the meeting. But another of these Cambridge meetings was still more memorable, and can never be forgotten in the history of our Society. I refer, as I need hardly say, to the meeting at good George Livermore's in 1856, just thirty years ago. From that meeting came the library and large endowment of our great benefactor, Thomas Dowse. Mr. Dowse was a neighbor and friend of Mr. Livermore, and had been specially invited by him to come over to our strawberry festival. Age and infirmities prevented his acceptance of the invitation; but the occasion induced him to inquire into the composition and character of our Society, and he forthwith resolved to place his precious books, the costly collections of a long life, under our guardianship, and to make them our property forever. From that meeting the regeneration of our Society may thus be fairly dated. Cambridge strawberries have ever since had a pecul-

iar flavor for us, — not Hovey's Seedling, though that too was a Cambridge product, but what I might almost call the Livermore Seedling or the Dowse Graft, which were the immediate fruits of our social meeting at Mr. Livermore's.

I know not that any such special result may be anticipated from the third social meeting at Cambridge which we are now enjoying. But Cambridge brings back the memory not only of Sparks and Longfellow and Livermore and Thomas Dowse, but of the lamented George Dexter, and of our latest benefactor, John Langdon Sibley. Meantime our excellent host himself has done enough for our Society, during his thirty-six years of faithful and devoted membership, to render this meeting at his residence worthy of being associated hereafter with our most notable social meetings. I should have felt guilty of great neglect, as the senior member of the Society, had I failed to bear witness by my presence here this afternoon to the unsurpassed services of Charles Deane, of which I have been so long a witness. I only wish that I could have found among my old papers, as he kindly suggested to me, something worthy of being communicated at such a meeting; but I have searched in vain.

Before taking my seat, however, I will read a brief extract from a letter which I received only yesterday from our Corresponding Member, the Hon. J. L. M. Curry, now the United States Minister at Madrid. In referring to the recent birth of a new King of Spain, he says: "A unique custom prevails at this Court. On the day of the birth the Diplomatic Corps were summoned to the palace in full uniform; and when the 'Viva al Rey' was proclaimed by the President of the Council, we were invited to a room adjoining the Queen's chamber, where profert was made of the royal scion *in puris naturalibus*." Dr. Curry then adds what is more pertinent to our proceedings, as follows: "Under the superintendence of Mr. B. F. Stevens, our despatch agent in London, two persons have been examining the archives in several cities, and copying what relates to our Revolutionary period. To use a Western mining-phrase, 'the find' has been valuable. Irving, Prescott, and Bancroft have used successfully these unprinted documents, but they have not found, or have left unused, much that would richly reward a searcher. I have had several applications for fragments of history for brief periods,

for single occurrences ; but some competent authority should cause to be transcribed and printed all that relates to our Revolutionary and pre-Revolutionary period. A comparatively small appropriation by Congress would render available a mass of rich material pertaining to Florida, Louisiana, the Mississippi, etc." This suggestion may be worth the consideration of the Committee to which Mr. Stevens's proposals have been referred, and to them I leave it.

Mr. DEANE laid before the Society a bundle of letters relating to the Winslow family, and on his motion they were referred to Mr. Winslow Warren.

After the meeting was dissolved, the members of the Society remained, and with many invited guests passed a pleasant hour in the enjoyment of the hospitality of Mr. Deane.